

Carol Valentine

A Brief History of Valentine Camp



Carol Lapham Valentine, born in 1910, a patron of the arts and horticulture and a civic leader, died March 16, 2009 in Montecito, CA. She was 98.

Photo right: Archie Crosby (left) and Henry O'Melveny (right) on lower Twin Lakes, Mammoth Lakes, California.



The History

The story of the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve starts for me in August 1958, when Edward Valentine and I were married. It was Valentine Camp then. Everything that happened before that time, I heard from Ed, or from Woody, or from members of the Valentine family, and even from a waiter who was serving at a party at the California Club. Albert, the waiter, told me he went "up there in the old days." "You'll love it," he added, and he was right.

But it was Archie Crosby, the Valentine's chauffeur for twenty four years, who wrote me the most detailed account of "the early days." He had retired to Mammoth Lakes, where I met him, but even after he had to move to a lower altitude he kept in touch with Ed, so I was able to write him later when UC wanted to know the history of Valentine Camp. This is the letter he wrote me:



Photo left: Edward Valentine (left) and Archie Crosby (right) with the "catch of the day."

Anaheim, California
May 18, 1972

Dear Mrs. Valentine,

I was very glad to hear from you, as I am always interested in the Valentine family, having worked for them for 24 years beginning in 1918. Edward was only about 11 or 12 years old when I first knew him.

I guess I am the only one still living of all of us who were concerned with the early days of Valentine Camp. They used to camp down on the meadow at the stream below the camp until the six men -- Mr. Valentine, Mr. Henry O'Melveny, Mr. Joe Cook, Mr. Kerchoff, Mr. Millican and Mr. Connell -- were able to buy the 160 acres and start Valentine Camp. I do not know how it happened to be called that unless they voted on it. They had trouble buying it because the people of Inyo County were very much against anyone from Los Angeles because of the water fight in the Owens Valley at that time and they were trying to protect their water rights. However, the men knew Dr. McQueen in Bishop, so he bought the property for \$20 an acre. This was in 1919, I think, and Mr. Valentine then bought a log cabin down in the meadow where they had camped previously and moved it up to the property and later had two wings built on for the present Valentine cabin. The kitchen, dining room and big fireplace were built in 1921 and were all open -- no windows. There was a big wood stove and gasoline lanterns for light. Later, came a butane stove and a Koehler [sic] plant for lights. Each man or two men built their own cabins -- Mr. Cook and Mr. Kerchoff one, Mr. O'Melveny and Mr. Millican and Mr. Valentine and Mr. Connell each alone. The Copley cabin was built much later.

The logs for all the cabins were bought from the Forest Service from the other side of Mammoth and brought into camp with mules. Mr. Ed Chamberlain and his brother-in-law John Tibbets, both from Bishop, were the builders and they had about 20 or 25 expert log men to do the work who camped on the place while working. The meat house was built at once, and that and the cold stream water were the only ways to keep things cold but they worked fine.

The men used to entertain their friends and business associates up there and had a big fire in the outdoor fireplace and waiters up from the California Club quite often. They had a cook who was a little Swiss man [J.J. Valens] and quite a character.

Of the men who originally owned the camp, Mr. Cook and Mr. Kerchoff died and Mr. Sartori was voted in, and after he died, his son-in-law, George Wallace, had his interest. He later died, also Mr. Millican either died or could not come anymore, but Mr. Valentine and Mr. O'Melveny were the outdoors men of the party anyway and always loved it very much.

At first the water came from a little spring back of the camp, but there was never enough water, so a spring across the creek up on the hill was developed and a small reservoir built and a pipe line with fire hydrants laid in the camp. In the 30s however, there was an earthquake and it made the water so brackish that it could not be used for drinking.

I don't remember what some of the cars were that came in. Mr. Valentine's was a Morman [sic] and Mr. O'Melveny used a King 8. The road across the desert was terrible, two ruts in the sand. Most of the men took the train from Mojave and from there to Lone Pine. They arrived about nine in the morning, and it took all day to get to Mammoth from there with a stop in Bishop for supplies. It was a very hard trip.

I hope this will answer some of your questions. There are so many things that I have missed, but if you think of any more questions I will be glad to answer them.

Forgot to tell you about the lake. While they had mules there for logs, they dug a diversion ditch from Mammoth creek, dug the lake, and made a ditch back to the creek. There used to be lots of fish in there.

When you see the changes from when you first knew Mammoth, you can imagine how different it was 54 years ago. I could go on and on about the old days there. If there is anything I could tell you, I would be happy to do so.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Archie B. Crosby

The Founders

I heard about the original founders from Ed, but just to make sure, I checked recently with an old friend of Ed's, Joseph Koepfli. Joseph is now 90 years old and still has a wonderful memory of early Los Angeles and "who was who."

William Lucas Valentine, Ed's father, was born in Northern California. He moved to Los Angeles as a young man and joined in the real estate business. He took advantage of all the opportunities a growing new town offered, including founding the Fullerton Oil Company, which was sold in the 1960s to Monterey Oil. He married Louie Robinson, the daughter of Henry Robinson, who founded Robinson's Department Store. I never knew Mr. Valentine well. Mrs. Valentine had come to Los Angeles at the age of eight from Brockton, Massachusetts. Her family owned the Boston Dry Goods Store in Brockton. Louie's father, Henry, came to California to raise race horses — trotters — and established a ranch in El Monte, but he continued the family business by founding a Boston Dry Goods Store in Los Angeles, which became Robinson's Department Store. Robinson's was acquired by Associated Dry Goods in the early 1950s.



Photo left: William Kerchoff (left) and William Valentine (right) standing in front of one of the cabins at Valentine Camp.

Henry O'Melveny was a lawyer and the founder of O'Melveny and Meyers (originally O'Melveny, Tuller and Meyers). Lewis Meyers, Henry's partner in the firm, was also a lawyer and important in the Los Angeles business world.

William Kerchoff was the head of Kerchoff Lumber. He had also been head of the Southern California Gas Company, which was eventually sold to Pacific Lighting.

Michael Connell was an Irishman from Boston, tall and handsome with white hair and moustache, who always wore a white carnation in his buttonhole. In 1907, Michael invested in an oil venture [Bellridge Oil] with Max Whittier and Burton Green. Green was the founder of the City of Beverly Hills. Michael sold his share in Beldridge Oil to Shell Oil in the 1930s. The rest of Beldridge Oil was sold to Shell in 1980.

Joseph Sartori was the founder of Security Bank. Physically, he was a very small man. I remember Ed showing me his cabin. Everything in his cabin was built on a small scale, including the bathtub, which appeared to be for a child. Sartori was also president of the Los Angeles Country Club and was responsible for moving the club to Beverly Hills, which was miles out of town in those days. Joseph Koepfli tells me that his mother and Joseph Sartori's mother founded the first golf course in Los Angeles — nine holes at Pico and Figueroa.

George Wallace was the adopted son of Joseph Sartori and took over as president of Security Bank when Joseph retired.

Ira Copley founded San Diego's *Union Tribune*, one of the largest privately owned newspapers in California.

Mr. Millican was a tax lawyer.



Photo: (left to right) Joe Cook, Joseph Sartori, Henry O'Melveny, unidentified man (back), William Valentine (front), and William Kerchoff by the creek at Valentine Camp.



The Cabins

The Valentine Camp property was purchased around 1916. Archie Crosby mentions in his letter to me that the property had to be bought through an intermediary because Los Angeles was so unpopular at that time. The City of Los Angeles was buying up land in the area for subsequent diversion of the water to Los Angeles. In his letter, Archie mentions Dr. McQueen from Bishop as one of the intermediaries. I think another intermediary may have been Lee Summers, a lawyer from Bishop.

I believe that the old Valentine cabin was an old ranger cabin moved to the property around the same time. Crosby, in his letter, mentions that he thought it was moved to the camp around 1919. However, I know that when Joseph Koepfli visited Mammoth Lakes and the camp in 1918, the cabin was already there. The remaining cabins, including four other main family cabins, a cookhouse, and two small caretaker's cabins



Photo left: A cook and waiter outside the cookhouse. The firepit on the left was used to cook meals outdoors, and the outdoor shelter on the right housed a large table where meals were taken.

near the entrance to the property, were built shortly after the Valentine cabin.

Originally, none of the cabins had kitchens. The men ate at the cookhouse in an outdoor shelter equipped with a huge fireplace. The cook and the waiters—Albert was one of them—stayed in the one of the one-room caretaker's cabins near the entrance gate. A brass bell used to be attached to the wall by the cookhouse door. It was the ship's bell from the *Volador*, William Valentine's sail boat. At the outset of World War II, the U. S. Navy commandeered small craft of more than 100 feet, and the *Volador* was among those commandeered. Legend has it that the *Volador* served as an interisland supply boat in the Phillipines, where eventually it sank. Whenever I visited the camp with my grandchildren, it was their great pleasure to ring the bell every time they passed by the cookhouse. Unfortunately, the bell disappeared one winter. Tom Beveridge, a local neighbor, says he remembers that there was a bell on the cabin until 1978. During the same winter several cabins were broken into. Snow depth once protected the cabins during the winter when no one was at the camp, but with the advent of snowmobiles, even a storm that brought snow to the cabin rooftops was not enough to deter vandalism.

Photo right: University Cabin,
originally the Connell cabin.



Photo below: One of the cabins,
perhaps the O'Melveny cabin,
which has been removed.



The Copley Cabin was Mr. Tibbets's masterpiece and was finished in 1928. Tibbets was a local cabin builder of some note. This is the cabin I now occupy. Originally, it had six bedrooms (five now, since one has been converted to a kitchen); two bathrooms, each one larger than any bedroom; a fireplace; and two lofts, since made usable with the addition of stairs and carpeting. This is the largest of the cabins. Its interior is chinked with wood, instead of concrete, which is unusual because it is time consuming to install. However, it is worth the effort for the beautiful finish it gives to the rooms.

Michael Connell's cabin, now called the University Cabin, has also been renovated to include a kitchen.

Mr. Sartori's cabin, the smallest of the five main cabins, was located just below the Connell cabin. It had three very small rooms and the minute bathtub. When Ed later occupied the Connell cabin, he offered the Sartori cabin to Jim Warta, an electrician in the village. Warta dismantled it, moved it to his property, and rebuilt it for his workshop. It is still in use as the Mammoth Cable TV office. The vacated space became a parking area for the Connell cabin.

The O'Melveny cabin had a large central room with a fireplace and four small rooms off the central room. After Henry O'Melveny died, it was shared by his sons, Stuart and John O'Melveny, and his daughter, Joan (Mrs. Lloyd) Mills. When the O'Melvenys no longer held an interest in the camp, I was able to offer the cabin to Tom Beveridge. Tom moved it to his property and made a fine house with the logs. Since the O'Melveny cabin was close to my cabin, I gained a parking area.

I was always glad to have the cabins reused and the logs in a home, instead of a stove. The cabins are pleasant to live in and need only a skylight or two to brighten them. The acoustics rival those of many a concert hall. Even old tapes and records resound beautifully against the wood.

The old Valentine cabin, which overlooks the ponds (Crosby calls them a lake), now houses researchers and a new laboratory. It also has a kitchen. The cookhouse still has the old stove, big store room, bedroom and bath. The outdoor shelter is also still there. I removed the big handmade table with log legs that used to be in the shelter and put it in one of the lofts in my cabin. It is a fine table for arts and crafts projects, which have kept my grandchildren busy over the years. I still have a fleet of boats my grandson, Nick Ophuls, made from milk cartons.

Photo right: Pack horses
at Mammoth Lakes,
California.



The Village

The road into Mammoth Lakes turned off Highway 395 at Casa Diablo. There was a boiling geyser there and a “spa” of sorts, if you call several large white bathtubs in a shack a spa. The geyser was later submerged and harnessed when a geothermal company took it over in the mid-1980s. The two-lane road wound its way to the village. Flowers and sagebrush lined the road on both sides. Part way up the road was the dump. It was a friendly sort of dump then. Usable articles were left to one side, separate from the trash. In fact, a corner table I have now came from there, brought to me by Woody Sampson, who called the dump “Robinson’s, Mammoth.”

The village centered around the intersection of the entry road and Old Mammoth Road. There was a Shell Gas Station on one corner and the Mammoth Tavern on the other. The ranger station and a junkyard of old cars and car parts were near the intersection. Further up was the post office, Buster’s Market, and Lloyd Nichols’ Hardware Store.

Old Mammoth Road itself was surrounded by open meadows, Jeffrey pines, and wildflowers. It crossed Old Mammoth Creek just before Arcularius’s meadow where Mr. Arcularius ran cattle on leased Forest Service land. It was a beautiful meadow filled with irises in the early summer. Arcularius had diverted water to the meadow from a creek upstream, so the meadow was always moist and grassy and green.



Photo left: A stream crossing on
the way to Valentine Camp.

The village has undergone many changes since then and is now an incorporated town of 5,000 permanent residents. There are supermarkets, shops of all kinds, an athletic club, tennis courts, condominiums, and all the appurtenances of suburbia. Arcularius's meadow has since been drained and now contains a golf course and a row of condos, but the mountains around the town are still there and the mountain air still smells of the forest.



In the summer of 1971, Andrea Mead Lawrence, a former Olympic skier and resident of Mammoth Lakes who had become worried about how Mammoth Lakes was growing without any planning, spoke at a Mammoth Lakes town meeting. Woody heard her speak and was impressed with her vision for the future of Mammoth Lakes. He asked me to telephone her, which I did, and we first became acquainted that way. Andrea was particularly concerned about the proposed development of a series of condos to be built on the slope to Chair Lift 7. They were to be one 300-yard-long building, hideous in design, which would block the view of everyone behind it. The development was promptly dubbed "the Chinese Wall." Almost single-handedly, Andrea led the opposition to it and formed a group called the "Friends of Mammoth." It proposed that private, as well as public, development proposals must require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Andrea used the Valentine Cabin that summer to organize the opposition. Although there were many facets to protecting Mammoth from poor development, she concentrated on the Chinese Wall, including finding a lawyer and raising money. In the end, the Friends of Mammoth decision was established throughout California.



Sometime later, I was called for jury duty in Santa Barbara. When I was questioned about my attitude towards an individual developing his or her property, I replied that I had no objections as long as they abided by all the local rules and regulations. "In fact," I replied, "I feel so strongly about it that I was one of the original supporters of the Friends of Mammoth." I was promptly excused, which was fine with me.



Photos: Dog sleds run by a local Mammoth man, Tex Cushion.



Photo left: (left to right)
Joe Cook, Joe Sartori,
Henry O'Melveny, and
William Valentine.

The People

I like to envision the arrival of the early owners of Valentine Camp. The above picture shows four of them. Look at their clothes, heavy boots, and leather puttees. You get the impression that they are also wearing white collars and ties. They took the train to Lone Pine, where they were met by cars and then driven over the rocky Sherwin Grade and over the unpaved and very dusty Old Mammoth Road. It must have taken all day. It takes 45 minutes now, but there is still a sign near the summit of Sherwin Grade stating that water is available there for your panting engine.

I doubt if the wives came in those days and, perhaps, they were not supposed to. Mrs. William Valentine, Ed's mother, told me it was a dreadful place: hot and dusty with fierce mosquitos and terrible food. In fact, Mrs. Valentine always thought I was being a good wife to go to Mammoth at all. Legend has it that Mrs. Copley took one look at the the cabin her husband had built and said, "No!" In fact, the Copley cabin was never occupied until I took it over after UC acquired the property in 1973.

Bill Valentine (Ed's brother) and Mary Stringfellow (Bill's wife) and their children came to the camp during World War II, when transportation difficulties

made other vacation spots hard to get to, and I know that various Connell relatives used the Connell cabin. The O'Melveny families came often, both the first and second generations.

Since the cabins had no kitchens, the various visitors engaged Florence Nichols, the wife of Lloyd Nichols, who owned the local hardware store, to cook for them. Florence cooked for Ed and his first wife, Mary, until they put a kitchen in the former Connell cabin and used it for their own. Florence was apparently a good cook, but, much to Ed's distress, she disposed of tin cans and bottles in her own little dump just off the road near the entrance gate. Ed finally had the trash cleaned up after Woody Sampson became the caretaker and Jane, Woody's wife, took over cooking for the occasional visitor.

Woody Sampson was very much a part of Valentine Camp. Ed was at Lloyd's store one day buying tools for some work he was doing on the cabin. He asked Lloyd if he knew of anyone he could hire to help him with work he could not do alone. Lloyd turned to Woody, who was at the store buying fishing tackle, and said, "The fish aren't biting, Woody. Why don't you do something useful?" So Woody came, and he stayed for the next twenty summers.

Woody was born in Maine and, like many others who went west, he never forgot his roots. He lived during the winters in Fillmore, California, and worked for a contractor. During the summers, he lived and worked at Valentine Camp. His wife, Jane, and their children spent summers at Valentine, too, until the children grew up and Jane, who worked for the county court in Ventura, had to stay behind to complete her time to qualify for a pension. Woody was not alone in the summers, however. He had his dog, Blanco, a white samoyed who was his alter ego. Blanco went with Woody everywhere. Blanco gave the impression of being fierce when Woody was telling trespassers they were not wanted, although Woody's attitude should have been intimidating enough to scare any trespasser. Woody was a firm believer in right and wrong. He was square in physique and in mind. He had no patience with hippies, communists, and what he called "weirdos," and certainly not with trespassers who couldn't read the No Trespassing signs. Consequently, he had trouble adjusting to the personalities of some of the researchers who visited after UC took over the camp. Some were more freewheeling than Woody thought suitable for a serious researcher.

Woody loved the place, and he knew every inch of it. If you said to him, there's a place on the Forest Trail right next to the turn after the big Jeffrey pine, he knew exactly where you meant. He knew the flowers and when they bloomed from year to year, the condition of the creek, the health of the trees, and where the animals were to be found. Despite his no-nonsense, down-to-earth personality, he once had an extraordinary intuitive experience.

One Sunday afternoon, while reading the newspaper in his cabin, he suddenly stood up, said to Blanco, "Let's go," got in his pickup, and drove up Old Mammoth Road. He stopped near the top of the camp property line, got out, and walked to a depression thirty feet or so from the road. He found an unconscious man lying partly in a pool of water. A motorcycle was nearby, apparently thrown there when the driver was unable to make the turn on the rough and rocky road. Woody had no explanation for how



HONORED •• Woody Sampson, left, was honored Sunday by Mrs. Ed Valentine (center) for 25 years service as caretaker of the Valentine Reserve at Mammoth Lakes. She presented Woody with many words of tribute and a 1882 goldpiece. At right is Jane Sampson, Woody's wife. They appear here in front of one of the Valentine cabins. Woody first came to Mammoth in 1937. Also honored was Bill Seal, caretaker at the Convict Creek Research Station. Both Woody and Bill are retiring from their present positions. Speaking at the event were Dr. Bob Haller of the Botany Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Roger Samuelson, who represented the University of California Office of the President. The 160-acre Valentine Reserve in Old Mammoth was presented to the University of California and dedicated in 1973. Sunday's tour of the reserve was limited to 200, with all guests being hosted by the Mammoth Hospital Auxiliary, who served tremendous refreshments. All donations from guests went to the Hospital Auxiliary.

Photo by Kerry Watkins

he knew he was needed there, for the man was not visible from the road and the road was seldom travelled. Needless to say, Woody saved the poor man's life.

UC engaged Woody to continue as caretaker after they took over the camp and, although I don't think he ever adjusted to the change, UC was generous in its benefits and gave him a superb party when he retired. The map of Valentine Camp Reserve shows Woody's Meadow, and Woody's ashes are at home in the meadow, as are Jane's.



Photos: Entrance to Valentine Camp off Old Mammoth Road (left). The old Valentine cabin in winter (below).



The Reserve

In 1972, Valentine Camp became the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve. Ed and I had often talked about the future of Valentine Camp. It became more obvious every year that Mammoth Lakes was changing. The camp was no longer surrounded by Forest Service land. Some of it had been traded for the ski slopes at Mammoth Mountain. The ski industry was growing every year, and the village grew accordingly with restaurants, shops, and motels. Old Mammoth Road, which divided the camp, had been paved beyond the camp property line, making it easily accessible for people wanting to picnic. The camp property along Lake Mary Road extended in a triangular piece beyond the road. Because Ed could not protect the divided property — campers and fires came with the paved road — he designed a subdivision off Old Mammoth Road, which Stan Hudeck developed. The triangular northern extension was sold to Mr. Joe Madden, a real estate speculator.

Ed also had the camp property lines resurveyed as the survey made when the original owners bought the land proved to be casual, to say the least. The southern line went through Mr. Bernard's living room and Mr. Christenson at the Hudeck tract had a bit of Valentine Camp in his house, too. Ed decided to each

the line he thought was the correct one. Some of this problem was caused by the fact that the fences followed the line of least resistance, instead of even the inaccurate original line.

Ed also had a subdivision map made of the camp showing a possible future division of the camp into buildable lots. He did not intend to use it himself but was looking to the future, depending on how Mammoth Lakes changed.

About 1965, Ed decided he would not be able to come to Mammoth anymore. The altitude no longer agreed with him. We had moved from San Marino, California, to Santa Barbara which was a climate that suited him better, and he wanted to stay there. He sent my son, Patrick Ophuls, and me on a chartered flight to Mammoth specifically to look over the town, to look at the camp, and to get some sense of what Mammoth would become, then return and advise him as to what he should do with the camp. Woody met us at the airport in Mammoth, gave us a lunch of his famous melted cheese sandwiches, and together we spent most of the day wandering around the camp, noting the condition of the cabins and the ponds. There were no trails at that time. We then drove around the town, looking at all the new development and hearing from Woody about what new building was contemplated and how skiing was becoming the driving force behind Mammoth's future. We returned

to say, "Valentine is beautiful, it is unique, it is still remote from the growth. Keep it with the understanding that it will not always be kept as a private camp."

In a very informal way, Ed and I had talked with Stuart O'Melveny, who was a member of the board of the Santa Ana Botanical Garden at Claremont, California, about offering the camp to the garden for an alpine botanic reserve. Informally, they were not interested. Stuart and his brother, John, were two-fifths owners of the camp. All the original owners, except the O'Melvenys, had either died or resigned by this time, and Ed's father, William, had taken over ownership of the other three-fifths. When William Valentine died in 1944, Ed, in an agreement with his brothers and sisters, inherited their father's three-fifths of the camp and took over its management. The O'Melveny seniors visited occasionally, as did their children, but around 1966 Stuart asked to be bought out. Instead, he took a five-acre piece of the property bordering Old Mammoth Road, which he gave to his daughter, Ann Wilson.

Ed died in 1968. My daughter, Maria Ophuls (now Grant), and I went up to the camp briefly that year. The place had to be resurveyed for Ed's estate. The camp was left to me and to the Valentine Foundation. Ed had told me this would give me time to make a decision about the eventual future of Valentine Camp. Ed had said that with the way Mammoth was developing, I would not be able to keep the property as it was, and we had discussed various organizations, such as the Santa Ana Botanic Garden, that might be able to use it. I had also talked with the children of John O'Melveny to see if they had any interest in taking one of the cabins (probably the Connell cabin, as I had plans to move into the Copley cabin). Neither did. I had thought that Joan Mills might, as she loved the place and had made a study of all the resident and migratory birds she had seen there. In fact, only one bird has been added to her list: the Saw Whet Owl, which was later observed by one of the UC researchers. I bought John O'Melveny's interest shortly after.

The Valentine Foundation, on whose board I served, functioned for a few years making small donations to various charities, including one to the Shady Rest campsite for handicapped campers at Mammoth. I continued to look around for the right organization to take and use the property. As I mentioned before, my first choice would have been for an alpine botanic garden. I got in touch the director of The Nature Conservancy in San Francisco. He told me that if the conservancy were to take over the property, it would only hold title and that I would be responsible for all planning and arranging for the property, including setting up a board of trustees — not at all what I wanted since I did not feel that I had the experience to organize such a project. I then tried the Audubon Society. Its director in San Francisco was interested and came to see the place. It was immediately apparent that he saw it as a place to run Audubon tours and house personnel — not what I wanted either.

About that time, I had a fortunate conversation with Elizabeth de Forest, a well-known horticulturalist, who had hiked and camped extensively in the Eastern Sierra and knew the land well. She suggested getting in touch with Vernon Cheadle, chancellor of the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). UC had recently started a program called the Natural Land and Water Reserves System (NLWRS), which had been given several properties around the state to use as outdoor study laboratories, not only for UC faculty and students, but for any student or researcher who had a valid reason for studying at a particular reserve. This seemed to be the right use for Valentine Camp. Vernon Cheadle liked the idea, and so did I. In July 1971, he sent his deputy, Jim Cherry, and a UCSB professor of botany, Dr. Bob Haller, to see the place.

Both Jim and Bob gave Vernon the green light. Vernon and his wife, Mary, came to visit shortly after that. Vernon immediately liked what he saw and agreed that the project should be recommended to the UC Regents for inclusion in the NLWRS's program (later shortened to Natural Reserve System [NRS]).

Photo: (left to right) Dr. Mildred Mathias, Dr. Carey Stanton, Carol Valentine, and UC President Charles Hitch.



UC president dedicates new land and water reserves

JULY 28, 1974 -- The University of California will raise \$2,000,000 to acquire and maintain natural reserves, President Charles J. Hitch said during week-end ceremonies here dedicating three new additions to the UC Natural Land and Water Reserves System. President Hitch said half of the amount will be used to acquire new reserves, and he expects a matching grant of about \$250,000 from the Ford Foundation. The dedication held on the UCSB Faculty Club lawn officially added to the system the Coal Oil Point Reserve, on the western portion of the campus; the Santa Cruz Island Reserve; and the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve in the Mammoth Lakes area. Chancellor Vernon I. Cheadle presided and paid tribute to Mrs. Carol L. Valentine, her late husband, Edward Robinson Valentine, and the Valentine Foundation of Santa Barbara. The Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve covers 136 acres of diverse terrain encompassing boggy meadows, creeks, sage- and pine-covered slopes, and basalt and pumice rock formations. In addition to the land, the Valentine Foundation gave an endowment fund of \$600,000 to maintain the property in its natural state and to support teaching and research operations connected with it.

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There was a ceremony held at Valentine Camp marking the accession of Valentine Camp to UC on July 28, 1974, and the camp officially became the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve. Dr. Bob Haller and Dr. Mildred Mathias, a UCLA professor and head of the UCLA Botanic Garden, attended on behalf of UC. Various leading citizens from Mammoth Lakes, including members of the local water board, county people, neighbors, and the Forest Service also attended. A stone marker was installed by the pond to commemorate the event.

I was happy that Valentine Camp had found a good home, and indeed it had. After Woody retired in 1979, Dan Dawson became the caretaker, and later Scott Christensen when Dan went to the Sierra

I suggested to the other members of the board of the Valentine Foundation that if the project with UC went through we should dissolve the foundation and give the assets as an endowment for the Valentine Reserve. The board consisted of good friends of Ed's, including Freeman Gates and Richard Grant, as well as Ed's nephew, Henry Buckingham, and Ed's niece, Sally Valentine-Lyon. They all agreed that this would be a good use of the property and the assets, and they said to go to ahead with the proposal.

The UC Regents accepted the property into the NLWRS in 1973. I went to a ceremony at UCSB, along with Carey Stanton, whose easement to UCSB on his Santa Cruz Island property was being honored at the same time.

Dodge Crockett, Jr., the chancellor's assistant for University Relations, replaced Jim Cherry in the negotiations with the UC Regents and he did the job with enthusiasm, imagination, and expertise. I had the place resurveyed so that my share and that of the foundation, were established. My share was to be two acres, including the Copley cabin and the former site of the O'Melveny cabin, to be used by me and my children and grandchildren for 99 years. All the other cabins were to be used by UC. Woody Sampson continued to live in the caretaker's cabin and to guard the reserve with the same attention he had always given to Valentine Camp. Dodge dealt with the various powers in Mammoth, including the Sanitary District which demanded water rights to the entire property in return for a mandatory sewer connection. Dodge solved the problem by annexing the area around the cabins to the Sanitary District.

Woody and I walked the place to establish the trails that would be necessary for more intensive use. Actually, it made the place more accessible to me, too, and, as Woody knew the place so well, the trails included the best sites to see flowers, trees, and vistas.



Photo: Carol Valentine looking out over the meadow at Valentine Camp.

Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory (SNARL). They cared for the place as their own and really loved it as Woody had. Researchers came and went, the village grew, but Valentine Camp stayed the same.

Dan Dawson continues to manage Valentine Camp and SNARL as two component sites of the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve. He and his wife, Leslie, the education coordinator for the reserve, have recently added a new and, I think, very important program — summer classes at the reserve for elementary and middle-school students. These students will have the opportunity to learn about the interrelationships of living things in their natural habitats and to increase their awareness of the natural world.

The reserve seems miles away from the town still. The gift of the Valentine Camp to the UC Natural Reserve System was the best possible way to preserve the land and use it beneficially, and UC has been a valuable and conscientious steward. The camp's inclusion in the UC Natural Reserve System has added to the knowledge of the natural environment of this part of the world and given pleasure to many. I have never regretted the decision to deed it to UC.